

Council, 13 July 2022

Questions from Councillors

Wards: All

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Report summary

Questions and answers submitted by Councillors, in accordance with the Council Committee Rules and Procedures as set out in the Constitution.

1. Councillor Donna Harris

To: Councillor Rezina Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air

Net gain of tree's planted

The Leader of the Council proudly stated recently that the administration plan to plant "5000 trees" over the course of the upcoming term. However similar promises have been made by previous administrations.

Can Councillor Chowdhury confirm that there will be a net gain of 5,000 trees in this period?

Party: Liberal Democrat

Answer:

Our commitment is for a net gain of 5,000 mature or standard trees, planted across the public realm, including in parks, on residential streets and housing land. On top of that we have pledged to plant dozens of new native hedges, mainly on housing estates where they will provide biodiversity benefits and help improve air quality for residents. Planting this number of mature trees in such a densely populated inner-city borough is a significant challenge. However, we are financing this promise with a major investment of £2.5m for the next three years alone. We will also be seeking external funding to expand the scope of the project and grant applications are already underway. Residents and businesses will also be invited to contribute through a revamped tree sponsorship scheme. Our new Tree Planting Strategy is under internal consultation and will be published shortly and sets out how we will prioritise planting locations – focusing on issues such as existing canopy cover, proximity to schools and healthcare facilities and the ability to contribute to flood risk mitigation.

2. Councillor Nicole Griffiths

To: Councillor David Amos, Cabinet Member for Finance and Cost of Living

Alleviating the struggle of households

Local Authorities are able to help in several direct ways to alleviate the struggles of households who are experiencing fuel poverty. Please can the cabinet member outline the actions being taken by this council to alleviate fuel poverty and if they include the following?

- a strategy that will improve energy efficiency / insulation on the Council's own housing stock with an aim to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030,
- deploy ECO Flexible Eligibility - to identify residents who may be in fuel poverty but may not fit under the current Energy Company Obligation funding criteria, and sign a declaration for them to make them eligible (1),
- take action to stop unaffordable rent rises and improve tenants' rights locally, (for example, serve improvement notices as part of any enforcement around Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards which will also protect tenants from no-fault eviction for 6 months)
- provide and promote accessible information, advice and guidance to local residents about reducing fuel bills, improving energy efficiency, their rights to welfare benefits and to help them access available funding and grants

1. <https://www.yesenergysolutions.co.uk/advice/what-is-flexible-eligibility-and-la-flex>

Party: Green

Answer:

As Cllr Griffiths will be aware, as a local authority we do not have any powers over private rent rises and the regulation of these. The Labour Mayor of London has been lobbying the government for powers to halt rent rises in London as another control measure to help with the cost-of-living crisis and housing-crisis but has been rebuffed repeatedly to date by successive Tory governments.

If a private renter has an issue in relation to an unreasonable increase in rent both Citizens Advice and Trading Standards officers can assist the tenant in referring the matter to the Courts and Tribunals Services. Tenants can apply to challenge rent increases and Private Sector Housing Enforcement can assist by assessing the property condition as a factor which can help the tenant's case.

When properties are assessed for issues relating to excess cold, we work informally with landlords in the first instance to address the issue. We will ask them to carry out remedial works to remove the hazard and should they fail to address these issues informally, we can then take more formal action by serving improvement notices.

Any specifications we issue will refer to providing efficient heating. Heating in properties should be affordable and with that in mind we ask landlords to install more cost-effective or adequate heating provisions so that tenants are not spending too excessively to keep warm. When we ask as part of our specifications of works to landlords for replacement boilers, these need to be SEDBUK rated A in order to comply with 2010 Building Regulations.

Also as part of the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing scheme within the borough, we visit properties and identify matters which adversely affect the health and safety of occupiers and take the appropriate action to ensure that these properties meet a specified standard. We also have the HMO licence condition (condition number 9) around Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). This mandates that works to improve sub-standard EPC rated properties shall be completed within 12 months to reach an acceptable standard (E or above).

We do have the option to take into consideration affordability when requesting improvement works formally. The Trading Standards Team work alongside colleagues within Private Sector Housing Enforcement to specifically look at general comms and promotion of compliance with MEES and requests for the presentation of Energy Performance Certificates.

The council will run a borough-wide campaign to increase awareness of fuel, food and other household support through the cost-of-living crisis. This will include a new website landing page summarising our support, leaflets, posters, digital and offline content such as letters, emails, social media and information sharing with local partners, advice agencies and community groups.

This will include information on how to access schemes such as the Lambeth Green Doctor service which supports residents to increase their energy efficiency and reduce their fuel bills through provision of personalised advice and a range of energy saving measures. Officers within the housing service have been piloting an innovative service offer from a tech-for-good company called Lightning Reach which provides residents with a single access point to a range of charitable funding and grants that they are eligible for. This forms part of the wider cost of living support activity providing a range of information, advice and guidance to residents on reducing the impact of high energy costs.

Lambeth Labour is retrofitting our social rented properties, schools, libraries, community centres and other council buildings. Lambeth has secured the second biggest grant in London to retrofit 1,000 social rent homes within the next year and overall have secured almost £20m in grant funding for climate change which we are match funding a significant amount towards. However, the scale of work and investment or the significant role central government should be taking cannot be downplayed. The biggest obstacle we face is a Tory government that is not fit for purpose and is failing to give local authorities the funding and powers to deliver net zero on a scale that would be necessary.

3. Councillor Marianna Masters

To: Councillors Marcia Cameron/Jim Dickson, Cabinet Member for Healthier Communities (job-share)

Health and wellbeing of vulnerable members of our community

London has a long-provided refuge for those seeking sanctuary. We are home to refugees from across the world who have come to the capital from a range of countries over recent decades.

As a result of the pandemic, the Home Office increasingly resorts to using hotels to accommodate people seeking asylum. This brings significant challenges. I regularly visit a hotel in Streatham Wells being used to house asylum seekers. Households are not able to live independently. For example, families do not have the money or the facilities to cook their meals and are reliant upon accommodation providers for food. People receive support payments of just £8 a week, which is intended to cover the cost of travel, non-subscription medication and clothing. Some households have been in these hotels for many months. I found many people just isolate in their rooms which I found so sad.

Can I ask what Lambeth is doing not just to perform statutory duties but also to safeguard the health and wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable members of our community?

Party: Labour

Answer:

Lambeth is proud to welcome and offer sanctuary to those who arrive in the borough due to conflict and persecution. To demonstrate this, on World Refugee Day, Lambeth announced its intention to become a Borough of Sanctuary. This builds on Lambeth surpassing the pledge to resettle Syrian families and a further pledge to resettle Afghan families as well as an ongoing commitment to the UK Resettlement Scheme, which is open to all refugees, regardless of where they come from. Following the invasion of Ukraine this year, the Council has worked with families and partner agencies to house over 240 Ukrainians under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

Lambeth also recognises the imbalance in support that asylum seekers receive compared to people arriving on resettlement and sponsorship pathways. In response to this, while having no statutory obligation, in August 2021 Lambeth created the Asylum Support service. This service aims to fill the gaps in the minimal support provided by the Home Office. The Asylum Support service oversees not only internal council response but also coordination between Home Office, asylum hotels, Clinical Commissioning Group, voluntary sector and commercial partners. Through this we have funded school uniforms, commissioned Welcome Classes for all three hotels meaning adults have access to ESOL, parenting classes and signposting to services and children can enjoy stay and play sessions, commissioned a support and recreational group for women, fundraised £40,000 from commercial partners to be spent on clothes, trainers, books and toys and mapped out an activity programme accessible to all asylum seekers.

These are just a few of the tangible outcomes provided on top of statutory services and it can be expected that this will be expanded as we continue on our Borough of Sanctuary journey.

4. Councillor Annie Gallop

To: Councillor David Amos, Cabinet Member for Finance and Cost of Living

Supporting residents through cost of living crisis

What is Lambeth doing with the household support fund to target the people who need help through the cost of living crisis?

Party: Labour

Answer:

As the Cabinet Member for Finance and Cost of Living I have recently agreed a £4.3m package of help for Lambeth residents struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. This package will offer extra financial help for those residents caught in the grip of the cost-of-living crisis by funding free school meals during the

school holidays for families on low incomes and direct payments to thousands of residents who are struggling to pay their bills.

As a Labour council we're targeting funding for those who need it most in the borough at a time when many people are struggling with rising household bills by offering:

- A targeted £150 Council Tax Energy Rebate for those on Council Tax Support not living in Band A-D properties
- £100 Additional support for low-income pensioner households
- £50 Additional support for low-income households (non-pensioners)
- £20 per child per week additional support for households with children, during the school holidays

In addition to this targeted funding the council is also providing additional funding via the Household Support Fund to the borough's at-scale food distribution services (Trussell Trust foodbank) and Healthy Living Platform and increasing access to the existing Green Doctor Service to support residents to reduce energy costs.

In a borough like Lambeth, where such a high proportion of our residents are already struggling to pay for basic needs like food and fuel, we can't and won't stand by and allow this crisis to let rip across the borough whilst the Tories in Westminster stumble from one scandal to the next. This package of support will help the people in our communities who are suffering the most. It is part of our commitment as Lambeth Labour to do everything we can to shield everyone, particularly our most vulnerable, from the worst effects of this crisis.

Throughout the pandemic, Lambeth Council acted to support families with help with food and household bills and is continuing to work with local charities like food banks to make sure help is there for those who need it. Earlier this year we increased Council Tax Support by £3m, permanently reducing the bills of almost 7,000 vulnerable households, with most seeing their bills reduced to nil.

While we know that this crisis for our residents can only truly be solved by central government action, this package is key to us meeting our manifesto commitment to take whatever action we can to help our residents at this difficult time. We will continue to do all within our power but also continue to lobby the government in Westminster to bring in much more support to help families in Lambeth through this cost-of-living crisis.

5. Councillor Diogo Costa

To: Councillor Ben Kind, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Educational achievement gap of Lusophone children and the Somos Lambeth

May I know the progress of Lambeth's programme on reducing the educational achievement gap of Lusophone children and the Somos Lambeth project?

Party: Labour

Answer:

Lambeth's children and young people deserve the best start in life. Despite a decade of Tory government cuts and the challenges of the pandemic, Lambeth Labour has worked hard to support our children and young people.

One of those challenges is tackling inequalities in our schools. Lambeth is home to one of the largest Portuguese-speaking populations in the UK, and as of 2018, Portuguese-speaking pupils make up 7% of Lambeth's total school population. However, Portuguese-speaking pupils are also Lambeth's lowest attaining pupil group. This underachievement represents a waste of potential and we as a borough should set an example to other local authorities and schools in improving Portuguese-speaking pupils' attainment and celebrating Portuguese-Lambeth identity.

Research shows that a number of factors were identified in the underachievement of Portuguese pupils, including the language barrier, socio-economic factor, new arrivals and pupil mobility factor, and the failure of the national curriculum to reflect adequately the needs of a diverse and multi-ethnic society.

We know that Portuguese pupils are often underachieving when compared to the main ethnic groups. However, there are also positive messages from Lambeth with positive improvement rates. Portuguese pupils in the authority who are fully fluent in English have achieved better than the local authority and national average. The trend data also shows an upward trend at KS1 and GCSE between 2000 and 2019. This needs to be celebrated, but often is not recognised.

Building on the promising results of the Raising the Game programme – which seeks to improve educational achievement for children from Black Caribbean backgrounds – the Lambeth Schools Partnership (LSP) has introduced Somos, which focuses on a similar approach for our Portuguese-speaking children.

Somos is a project-in-progress which will focus on raising the achievement and profile of Portuguese-speaking students in Lambeth. The project aims are to provide an improved offer for Portuguese-speaking pupils, celebrating Portuguese speaking identities in Lambeth, and support families and foster community collaboration.

18 schools are now signed-up to the project, the Somos Champions Network has been set up, with good practice shared. Highlights from the project so far include:

- Inspiration events at both primary and secondary schools.
- Identity photo competition and Sing Lambeth launched.
- Community singing at Janeiras and Child Friendly Lambeth Event.
- Somos Showcase on LSP website.
- Azulejo online exhibition.
- Reading Buddies network set up between primary and secondary schools.
- Individual school-led initiatives, such as creating Portuguese cookery books.
- Lusophone Celebration event in June 2022.

6. Councillor Sonia Winifred

To: Councillors Marcia Cameron/Jim Dickson, Cabinet Member for Healthier Communities (job-share)

Government's disregard for human rights

This Government is clearly using racism as a means to address the immigration issue in this country. The Home Secretary's Policy to deport Asylum seekers to Rwanda for processing has been halted, deemed illegal and in breach of human rights by the ECHR.

Lambeth is a diverse, welcoming borough, we have always welcomed refugee and asylum seekers! what is the Council's response to this Government's racist and blatant disregard for human rights?

Party: Labour

Answer:

Lambeth is an inclusive borough that celebrates its rich cultural and ethnic diversity. Our borough has a proud history as a beacon of opportunity for migrant communities from across world and has welcomed refugees and asylum seekers that been displaced by violent and the subject of persecution. We condemn this Conservative government's hostile environment which has seen increasing in the racial profiling of Lambeth's migrant and refugee community. This government's plans to deport people seeking asylum to Rwanda is a flagrant breach of the UK's humanitarian obligation and goes against the compassionate nature of our country.

On World Refugee Day, Lambeth announced its journey to become a Borough of Sanctuary as part of our commitment as a welcoming borough. We have proudly welcome Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan refugees and exceeded our pledge to resettle Syrian families. Our residents have opened their homes to 241 Ukrainians under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and our voluntary and community sector continue to provide support to all families seeking sanctuary.

At a time of rising levels of hate crime, Lambeth is committed to making our borough a more welcoming place for all our residents. We established the Equality Commission in 2017 that identified barriers and the solutions to tackle them. Following the tragic death of George Floyd, we have conducted a council wide review on race and equality in response to his murder which resulted in Lambeth United that continues to review historic links to the slave trade. We'd like to commend Cllr Winifred for bringing these important issues to the fore and championing the work of the commissions as the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture to see our borough become a more inclusive, open and welcoming borough for all.

7. Councillor Alison Inglis-Jones

To: Councillor Maria Kay, Cabinet Member for Better Homes and Reducing Homelessness

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

The Oaklands Estate, in the Clapham Common and Abbeville Ward, is a wonderful community but for far too long residents have had to put up with unacceptable levels of anti-social behaviour in the two blocks (Eastman House and Cubitt House) which do not have security doors.

Previous Labour councillors working with the housing officers and Oaklands Estate Tenants & Residents Association, have helped install CCTV and have a commitment to introduce security doors - following consultation with the residents of those blocks.

I would like an outline of the process and timeline from now until the doors are able to be installed and what other steps the Council is taking alongside the police to clamp down on anti-social behaviour.

Party: Labour

Answer:

Lambeth completely understands the concerns residents have raised about the unacceptable levels of anti-social behaviour on their estate. The Oaklands Estate and its residents' safety remains our top priority and our housing officers are leading a response with our public protection team to increase Met Police patrols across the estate while we support residents experiencing ongoing issues.

Eastman House and Cubitt House are a focus for our public protection team, and we are working to reduce reported incidents so that residents can feel safe in their community.

Oaklands Estate is now a priority location that is monitored daily by public protection officers. Over the past year, Lambeth has worked to task the Met Police to increase patrols of the estate with weapon sweeps that will be conducted over the course of the summer. Surveillance cameras were recently installed which has made a substantial difference: helping to identify suspects and importantly deter them. I want to thank my Labour colleagues who have worked so hard alongside the Oaklands Estate Tenants & Residents Association have brought this important issue to the council's attention.

We will deliver our commitment we made to residents to install security doors on blocks across the estate. Officers are with suppliers to have the security doors installed as soon as possible and we will update ward councillors and residents when these arrangements are finalised. Residents should be rest assured that we share your concerns. We are clamping down on anti-social and we encourage you to report incidents directly to the Housing Service and the police so that action can be promptly taken.

8. Councillor Paul Gadsby

To: Councillor Rezina Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air

Electrical charging points for vehicles

Can the cabinet member give an update on the borough's plans for the roll out of more electrical charging points for vehicles in the next four years, and specifically the plans for Myatt's Fields ward.

Party: Labour

Answer:

We have over 250 lamp column chargers across the borough as well as 58 Fast chargers and 20 Rapid chargers. We have secured funding for a further 116 Lamp column charge points for delivery in 22/23 and are going through a procurement process for a further 8 Ultra Rapid Charge points.

Of the 116 charge points due for delivery in 22/23, we plan to install 5 within the Myatt's Field area to supplement the existing 8 charge points.

Within our housing estates There are currently 22 charging points installed at 11 estates:

Estate	Ward
Vauxhall Gardens	Vauxhall
Springfield	Stockwell West & Larkhall
Poynders	Clapham Park
Hillside Gardens	Streatham Wells
Cotton Gardens	Kennington
Albert Carr Gardens	Streatham Common & Vale
York Hill	Knights Hill
Canterbury Gardens	Brixton Windrush
Oaklands	Clapham Common & Abbeville
Tulse Hill	Brixton Rush Common
Weir	Clapham Park

We are currently in the process of updating our Electric Vehicle Strategy and delivery plan. This work is being developed jointly with house team and will enable a bit into the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure scheme when the fund opens in late 2022. The aim of the strategy update is to ensure we deliver an appropriate number of chargers to support the wider de-carbonisation of transport in Lambeth, in line with the Climate Action Plan. Noting Cllr Gadsby's request for plans relating to the Myatts Field ward, consideration as to which estates are to be included in the bid will be given over the next few months.

9. Councillor Matthew Bryant

To: Councillor David Amos, Cabinet Member for Finance and Cost of Living

Council Tax

The Council's budget papers for 2022/23 show that there are 109,971 properties in Council Tax bands A to D which are potentially eligible for the £150 Council Tax Energy Rebate announced by the Government in February.

How many of the eligible Council Taxpayers have received their Council Tax Energy Rebate as at 22 June 2022? And when does the Council expect to have contacted all eligible Council Taxpayers that have not yet received their Council Tax Energy Rebate?

Party: Liberal Democrats

Answer:

It is estimated that 108,382 properties are eligible for the £150 Council Tax Energy Rebate, that was announced by the Government in February. Of the eligible properties, 55,280 Council Taxpayers currently pay by direct debit and as of 22 June 2022, 52,359 of these have received their £150 Council Tax Energy Rebate. Accounts where April direct debits were confirmed have all been paid and other accounts, where direct debit details were held, have been requested to apply for the Council Tax Energy Rebate. These include those where April direct debits were unpaid, historical direct debit details were held, those accounts where bank details and liable party names were significantly different. Those accounts in receipt of Council Tax Support with historical direct debit details have been paid directly by Post Office Payout.

Of the eligible Council Taxpayers that do not pay by direct debit, the Council has written to 15,822 in total inviting applications. This includes those direct debit accounts mentioned above, and 9,817 non-direct debit accounts. In addition, as of 22 June 2022, 19,335 payments had been issued via Post Office Payout with a further tranche of payments sent to the Post Office on 23 June 2022 to take this total to 36,896.

The Council has a further tranche of 1,246 accounts where letters will have been issued on the week commencing 27 June 2022, inviting applicants to apply. There will also be a further tranche of 347 accounts who will be issued a payment via Post Office Payout. Once this is completed all eligible applicants will either have had:

- A payment by BACS Transfer
- A payment issued by Post Office Portal
- A letter inviting an application to apply for the CTER

10. Councillor Verity McGivern

To: Councillor Rezina Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air

Play facilities in Agnes Riley Gardens

At the election, we pledged to improve play facilities in Clapham Park, particularly in Agnes Riley Gardens, the only park in the ward and the closest green space to several social housing estates. Can the cabinet member outline work she is doing to support Agnes Riley Gardens?

Party: Labour

Answer:

The current Parks Capital Investment Plan includes a project at Agnes Riley Gardens, with a budget of £223,000 from previously secured s106 planning gain. The project is underway and a project manager has been appointed. Decisions will be made through a project steering group, which will include ward councillors, parks officers and the Friends of Agnes Riley Gardens. Plans are also underway to bring the disused depot back into productive use; and a separately funded initiative is focusing on

sustainable water management in the park and reducing the surface water flooding experienced after very heavy rain.

11. Councillor Jackie Meldrum

To: Councillor Danny Adilypour, Deputy Leader (Cabinet Member for Sustainable Growth and New Homes)

Developments in Lambeth

In recent years there have been substantial development in much of the borough. Can the cabinet member please summarise the value to the whole borough of these developments, particularly in terms of affordable housing, increased council tax and business rates and Community Infrastructure Levy?

Party: Labour

Answer:

It's my priority to ensure that Lambeth's planning policy delivers sustainable growth that meets residents' needs and housing developments maximise the number of genuinely affordable new homes for local people. In areas of increasing growth the benefits of developments must be fairly shared and re-invested in areas across our borough.

Lambeth, like most of London, is experiencing an unprecedented housing crisis. Over 30,000 people are on the council's waiting list in Lambeth and every night, the Council provides temporary accommodation for over 2,700 homeless families. Alongside our wholly owned housing company that is embarking on the biggest council and affordable housing programme in a generation, we are working with house builders to do the same.

In the last administration, between 2018 and 2021, the Council granted planning consent for 2,514 units of affordable housing and secured an additional £39.1 million in developer contributions to spend on the delivery of affordable housing across the borough.

Between 2018-22, the Council Tax base increased from 107,712 to 111,161 homes which has resulted in an extra £4.4m per annum, depending on the level of Council Tax support that is there to support vulnerable and low-income residents. This increase helps to fund vital services for our residents. Business Rates rateable value has increased by £20.8m. However due to changes in government policy, not all of this revenue is directly spent in Lambeth.

We are reinvesting in our communities through taxes on private developers. Over £31m has been raised through Community Investment Levy and S106. This has been used to fund the capital programme the years 2018-22 and over £10m of Neighbourhood Community Investment Levy has been made to support Employment and Skills initiatives, the Local Economy Hardship Fund and a programme of grant funding to community organisations. Around £1m of s106 employment and skills contributions have been used annually as revenue funding for programmes which implement the Council's Skills and Employment Strategy.

Councillors will know that we launched the Community Connections Fund this year. The £4million fund, raised through NCIL contributions, will support local groups, projects and good causes across North Lambeth, Waterloo, Brixton, and Stockwell over the next three years. The first round of £1 million funding launched in March has great interest from budding community groups and residents with ideas to improve their neighbourhoods. Over the coming months, the administration will continue the work of sharing the benefits of growth throughout the borough as we thrive to make Lambeth a better place to live, work, and enjoy the benefits that life brings.

12. Councillor Scott Ainslie

To: Councillor Maria Kay, Cabinet Member for Better Homes and Reducing Homelessness

Increase in Homeless and vulnerable people

We have noticed a recent increase in the number of homeless and vulnerable people on Streatham High Road. What additional measures are you planning to put in place given that these numbers have been rising and unless urgent action is taken, are likely to continue to rise with the cost of living crisis?

Party: Green

Answer:

I share Cllr Ainslie's concerns about rising levels of homelessness and rough sleeping in our borough. We are only acutely aware of the impact of this Conservative government. The scale of housing crisis we face as a community means we unfortunately will see more people finding themselves without a roof over their head as they struggle to make ends meet.

The homelessness crisis is not unique to our borough, we have seen rising homelessness get worse year on year under this Tory Government. All while the government hammer councils like Lambeth that are on the frontline protecting our vulnerable residents. Over the past twelve years we have seen significant cuts in government funding and the withdrawal of decent homes grant designed to give our residents a decent standard of living. There are thousands of families dealing with the awful reality of homelessness. Over 34,000 people are on our housing waiting list and almost 3200 homeless families, including 5,000 children, live in temporary accommodation every night.

In Lambeth we have a proud record of supporting and protecting those facing homelessness. The Council has committed to over £4 million a year to dedicated services which offer support to those who are homeless and sleeping rough, with a particular focus on preventing homelessness in the first place. This is in addition to embarking on our biggest council and affordable housebuilding programme in a generation: delivering new, better, energy efficient homes for people on the housing waiting list.

As part of our homelessness prevention strategy, Lambeth commissions a 7 day per week Outreach Service that works across the borough to support rough sleepers. I've seen this vital work up-close, conducting night patrols with the team. It's important that all members have the chance to experience this for themselves. I'd also encourage Cllr Ainslie to provide our outreach team with the details of those individuals sleeping rough on Streatham High Street so that we can support them in the best possible way.

In the year to March 2022, 224 rough sleepers were supported off the streets and into accommodation. Lambeth's Rough Sleeping Outreach Team conduct regular patrols of our streets to support rough sleepers into warm and safe accommodation. On 27 April, our outreach team counted only 10 individuals were found rough sleeping that night. This is Lambeth's lowest recorded street count figure for over a decade. Recent figures from last summer show that Lambeth supported more than 400 who were at risk of becoming homeless – more people supported than in any other London Borough during the same period.

Lambeth also commissions one of the largest Vulnerable Adults Accommodation Pathways in the country, which has 444 bedspaces for some of the borough's most vulnerable homeless residents. This Pathway consists of a mixture 24-hour hostel accommodation and low-level supported homes to those who need that support.

We know there is more work to do. We will continue to see increasing levels of homelessness and rough sleeping as the cost of the living crisis deepens. Lambeth Council will continue its programme of investment and target our outreach services to ensure that all people sleeping rough in Lambeth are supported off the streets and assisted in improving their lives.

13. Councillor Fred Cowell

To: Councillor Rezina Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air

Speeding on Norwood and Croxted Road

The speeding on Norwood and Croxted Road has reached a point where the number of crashes, leading to a situation where there is a risk or occurrence of death or serious injury meets the criteria set out by the Department of Transport for the installation of speed cameras. In the last two years crashes have overturned vehicles, landed cars in front gardens, and led to oil slicks on the road. The neighbouring London Borough of Southwark has a speed camera on the half of Croxted Road it manages. What can we as a borough do to get speed cameras on these roads before someone gets hurt?

Party: Labour

Answer:

The borough has a 20mph limit on all roads we manage, and we have a rolling programme to improve traffic calming, installing new features such as humps for example. We continually monitor data on traffic levels and collisions and feedback received from the community and stakeholders. Local authorities have no legal powers to enforce against speeding. All enforcement is carried out by the police and the installation of speed cameras requires agreement with them. Officers and I will be raising this issue with the police and enquiring whether a speeding camera would be possible on this road.

We are currently preparing the council's Road Danger Reduction Strategy. This will include a review of all the possible actions required to help achieve 'Vision Zero'- the Mayor of London's ambition to reduce road danger to the extent that no-one is killed or seriously injured on our roads. As part of this process, we are reviewing locations where collision clusters have been recorded and where we have

received feedback from the community in relation to road danger. This will lead to a programme of interventions that we will deliver, subject to funding, over the next few years.

14. Councillor Rebecca Spencer

To: Councillor Danny Adilypour, Deputy Leader (Cabinet Member for Sustainable Growth and New Homes)

Start of works on Roman Rise

When will building start on Roman Rise (the planned new 31 homes in Gipsy Hill)?

Party: Labour

Answer:

Roman Rise will deliver 31 affordable new homes, of which 22 will be for council rent. These new homes will be warmer, greener and safer for Lambeth families – helping to get them off the council housing waiting list.

Construction works plan to start around October/November 2022. Officers are hard at work finalising the agreement of the full building work contract over the summer and enabling works are ongoing. The final start date is subject to legal processes to remove travellers safely from the site.

As lead member for Sustainable Growth & New Homes, I'm proud that we are finally breaking ground at Roman Rise. We know all too well the impact of the housing crisis on our borough. Some families on our estates are living in poor-quality homes, facing problems with damp, cold, mould, and overcrowding. Over 30,000 people are on the council's waiting list in Lambeth and every night, the Council provides temporary accommodation for over 2,700 homeless families, including some 5,000 children.

That's we set up our wholly-owned house building company, Homes for Lambeth. We are embarking on the biggest building programme in Lambeth for a generation: because we know the housing crisis can't be fought without the council playing its part to build homes for local families.

15. Councillor Ben Curtis

To: Councillor Rezina Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air

Bus Services

Recent comments from Transport for London, published by the BBC, suggest that bus services across London could be cut by up to one fifth. In Lambeth, we've seen a steady reduction in the bus services available to residents – with some routes being shortened and some being cut in their entirety. Will the Council publish its response to TfL's consultation on this issue, and will the Cabinet member secure a cross-party meeting, involving all groups on this Council, with the Mayor of London to put the case for Lambeth passengers?

Party: Liberal Democrats

Answer:

Bus services are an essential component of Lambeth's sustainable transport offer and provide an essential transport option, notably in the south of the borough where rail options are limited. The lower cost of using the bus network make it essential in supporting those on lower incomes to move around the borough. Lambeth is committed to working with TfL and bus service operators to try to secure improved bus services in Lambeth – for east west journeys in the south of the borough for example. We are also working to increase the level of priority buses have on our streets so that journey times are reliable – implementing bus lanes for example.

We are currently preparing a response to Transport for London's consultation on changes to the bus network, opposing cuts to our services, particularly the 45 and 59 routes. While acknowledging the financial difficulties currently being experienced by TfL and the current lack of a long-term funding settlement from Government, we will be pressing for the best possible outcome for bus users in Lambeth.

16. Councillor Martin Bailey

To: Councillor Rezina Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air

School Streets, Wyvil Road

Wyvil Road in Vauxhall is a classic example of a road clogged with traffic particularly at the start and end of the school day. Used by car drivers as a rat run to avoid the Vauxhall Gyratory, this narrow two-way road which cuts through both sites of Wyvil Primary School, both discourages other parents from walking and cycling to school down this road, but also adds to the levels of air pollution around the school.

Wyvil Primary has support of the leadership and parents to extend a School Streets trial to the school. Will the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People commit to supporting the school to make this happen in time for the next academic year?

Party: Labour

Answer:

School streets are a key part of our commitment to promote safe, sustainable travel to school, reducing congestion, emissions and promoting healthier lifestyles. Working with our schools, the Active Travel team has already implemented 25 school streets across the borough. Officers are currently assessing all remaining schools in Lambeth to see whether a school street is feasible. Once this work is completed in the summer, we will then develop a delivery programme and proceed as quickly as possible to roll out a further wave of school streets. We anticipate delivering a further 25 locations with the funding currently available. Subject to the assessment, we will work closely with local Councillors, the school and parent community to implement the school street as soon as possible.

17. Councillor Ibtisam Adem

To: Councillor Danny Adilypour, Deputy Leader (Sustainable Growth and New Homes)

Community Engagement and Consultation in West Norwood

We note the only Neighbourhood Plan agreed to date has been the Southbank & Waterloo Neighbourhood Plan which was put to public referendum in October 2019.

The Norwood Planning Assembly is a group of residents who have volunteered to work on the West Norwood Neighbourhood Plan. What resources has Lambeth council provided to date to support this work and in light of the Site 18 and Site 19 potential developments would the cabinet member consider providing further resources to enable the necessary community engagement and consultation in West Norwood?

Party: Labour

Answer:

I understand that The Norwood Planning Assembly was designated by the Council as a neighbourhood planning forum in July 2017. The five year designation has nearly expired and we understand the NPA wish to apply for re-designation. Officers have offered support for this process in the form of a reminder about the need to re-apply, advice about how to do so, the offer of a meeting and an offer to comment on a draft application prior to formal submission. In the last six years, officers from Lambeth have met with NPA representatives on several occasions to discuss their emerging neighbourhood forum and neighbourhood area applications, and their emerging thinking about the content of a neighbourhood plan. The Council also makes all of its planning information and data available online, for use by the public including neighbourhood planning groups.

In 2020, the NPA wrote to the Council about the direction of travel for its emerging policies and officers provided detailed written comments in response and offered to take part in a workshop session (virtually) to discuss these. The NPA did not take up this offer at the time, but it remains open. The Council has an agreed policy on providing advice or assistance to neighbourhood planning forums within statutory [Statement of Community Involvement Oct 2020.pdf \(lambeth.gov.uk\)](#) and officers will continue to follow this policy when providing support to the NPA.

The Council is very keen to work with the community on what development and growth looks like in West Norwood and how we can deliver investment, jobs, affordable homes and public benefits. We recognise the strength of feeling around the draft site allocations for West Norwood. That is why we are launching a further period of engagement with stakeholders and the community in that part of the borough to further understand their feedback to the consultation, to clarify next steps and what the principles would be for a vision for the area which would deliver public benefits that are important to the community.

18. Councillor Martin Tiedeman

To: Councillors Marcia Cameron/Jim Dickson, Cabinet Member for Healthier Communities (job-share)

Operose Health

Operose Health, the UK arm of US corporation Centene, has taken over a large number of GP practices, including Streatham Place Surgery in my ward. In the light of the evidence of inadequate care provided by practices owned by Operose, as uncovered by the BBC Panorama programme in June, what steps are the Council and Lambeth Together taking to ensure that Lambeth residents are receiving a high standard of service from GP practices owned by Operose which operate in the borough?

Party: Labour

Answer:

The BBC Panorama programme principally concerned a GP Practice in North East London. There are two GP Practices in Lambeth run by AT Medics Ltd/Operose – Edith Cavell Surgery (of which Streatham Place Surgery is a branch site) and Streatham High Practice. Both Practices have a combined list size of over 40,000 patients and have seen significant growth in recent years as patients choose to register there. As with all 41 GP Practices in Lambeth, the local Lambeth and South East London CCG teams routinely monitor key performance indicators around the accessibility and quality of services provided, and historically Lambeth Practices have had high patient satisfaction scores, and performed well on other measures such as regulatory outcomes from the Care Quality Commission.

In addition to existing work programmes to support Practices as they contend with challenging rises in the demand for care following the pandemic, additional assurance checks have been carried out by the local team following the BBC Panorama programme in question. Both Lambeth Practices run by AT Medics Ltd/Operose are rated 'Good' by the CQC, and each is rated 'Outstanding' for being "Well Led" and "Responsive" respectively. As two of the largest Practices in Lambeth, both have large and multidisciplinary workforces, drawn from different professions and involving employment of local people, and both are Training Practices engaged in supporting the next generation of the clinical workforce. There are no concerns around the levels of staffing or senior clinical supervision at either Practice.

Both Practices perform highly across a broad range of quality and performance indicators against which General Practices are measured – with particularly good outcomes for local patients around diabetes, hypertension, flu vaccination, bowel cancer screening, and one of the best digital access models in London. The Practices ran a successful covid vaccination centre at Streatham Place Surgery, vaccinating thousands of local residents – and including extra outreach services provided to local schools and the South London Islamic Centre. The Practice is also supporting new refugee arrivals into the area. Local teams will remain vigilant and engaged with Practices to ensure standards are maintained, and other areas supported to improve where needed, but I am assured that there are currently no grounds for concern for yourself or your constituents about the quality of services at these two surgeries. I also understand that the Practices have invited you to visit and meet them and their teams.

As in other parts of London and nationally, there remain significant pressures upon General Practice services following the pandemic. There have been rises in demand for services, an increasing complexity to the care needed, and wider challenges around being able to recruit and retain the workforce to support this, including GPs. Work to address these workforce challenges will continue at pace in Lambeth and the South East London ICS, and this involves exploring innovations around the use of new additional roles such as Social Prescribers, Pharmacists, Physician Associates, Physiotherapists and Mental Health Practitioners. All will have a crucial role to play to ensure patients can receive good quality care in a way that is tailored to their needs.

19. Councillor Saleha Jaffer

To: Councillor Jacqui Dyer, Deputy Leader (Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Equalities)

Equality information for Planning Team

When attending the planning training I realised the low representation of BAME managers in planning staff team. Can I have the equality breakdown of Manager level staff in the council especially in planning team. Are we meeting the equality targets?

Party: Labour

Answer:

In Lambeth we are passionate about equality, strengthening diversity, and delivering inclusion. We believe it is important that our workforce reflects the communities in the borough that we serve.

The diversity of our senior workforce has continued to improve overall. We have seen positive, gradual progress being made in the percentage of senior staff who are women and those who are from an ethnic minority. We have chosen EDI targets which are significantly more challenging than those in other London boroughs and the positive trending of performance gives some confidence that these ambitious targets are progressing in the right direction.

But there is much more to do. The appointment of a permanent Director of Human Resources and the ongoing work of our Workforce Transformation Delivery Group should see us well placed to further improve these indicators in 2022/23.

The planning service forms part of the Sustainable Growth and Opportunity (SGO) directorate. There are external challenges that SGO faces when it comes to the diversity of the built environment professions themselves, such as chartered town planners and chartered surveyors, which is currently not very diverse, particularly at manager and senior manager levels.

In February 2020 the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) launched its first 10-year action plan to address equalities, diversity and inclusion in the profession. According to the RTPI's UK Planning Profession 2019 study, 6% of members are from Black, Asian and Minority or Multi Ethnic backgrounds. Although not like-for-like, this compares to 15% of total staff at middle and senior management levels in SGO and 12.5% in the planning service. A positive finding according to the study

was that student membership is growing rapidly, especially across Black, Asian and Minority or Multi Ethnic backgrounds. This bodes well for the future.

The SGO directorate aspires to be more representative of our residents so that they feel their interests are reflected in its work. It has recently developed an Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy to cover the period 2022-2025. This was an identified action in the Race & Diversity in Lambeth Council Report 2020.

This strategy has a strong focus on improving the representation of Black, Asian and Minority or Multi Ethnic colleagues within the directorate and especially at management and senior management level. It includes a series of short, medium and longer-term actions with a focus on recruitment and career progression. These actions will aim to help drive positive change in the directorate, including the built environment professions.

20. Councillor Isla Wrathmell

To: Councillor Claire Holland, Leader of the Council

Lambeth Counselling and Support Services to Vulnerable Adults

Oxleas NHS Trust was commissioned to offer a Lambeth Counselling and Support Services to Vulnerable Adults (LCSSVA) who had applied to the Lambeth Redress Scheme, who do not wish to pursue treatment in the South London and Maudsley Trust (SLAM). Initially commissioned from 2015 to September 2018, this was extended until June 2022. Has an extension been granted to this service? In either case, what is the rationale for the decision?

Party: Labour

Answer:

Lambeth Council's redress scheme is the first of its kind in the country with the compensation and support provided to victims and survivors having exceeded £100 million. Creating this unique compensation scheme has been incredibly important for our borough, particularly in the absence of a national scheme for victims and survivors. Hundreds of victims and survivors have received an apology, counselling support and compensation for how they were treated while in the care of Lambeth council.

The Redress scheme closed at the end of December 2021. It was always planned that the Oxleas support service would continue for 6 months beyond the end of the scheme, until the end of June 2022, to accommodate the provision of support for people who might apply to the Redress scheme relatively late in the day. It was agreed with Oxleas that this would not be an open-ended service and would be timed to coincide with the Redress scheme itself. The feedback from Oxleas is that most people who have accessed the service are now ready to move on following the end of the scheme.

For those clients who may still feel that they want some kind of support, or who presented towards the end of the Redress scheme and require longer support, the council has worked with third sector

organisation Usemi to set up a new support offer, which includes both peer and individual support that can be accessed either remotely or in person:

1. A weekly peer support group – with the aim to train group members as peer facilitators.
2. A drop-in service where members can come and go with flexibility to access the support of both peers and therapists.
3. Individual support with therapists available for 1-2-1 emotional support on demand.

The idea for a peer support group has come from some clients currently accessing the Oxleas service who stated this would be their preferred choice of ongoing support once the service finishes and this new offer has been co-developed with input from clients. Like the Oxleas service, the peer and individual support will remain independent from the Council and offer more self-determination, choice and continuity for potential clients with clear governance arrangements and safeguards.

This offer launched in June 2022 and will be in place for up to a year and will then be reviewed based on demand.

Finally, the offer for specialist individual counselling funded by the Council is still available for those who need it.